

VANGUARD

Tus Feadha

20p (10p UNWAGED)

ISSUE ONE

JIMMY REID - RENEGADE

By Freddy Anderson

This ex-Communist, like so many of his kind, who seek to lay their services out for hire to the capitalists, display an anti-communism so vicious that it almost measures up to the obsessive mania of a Goebbels, a Truman, a MacCarthy, a Thatcher or a Reagan. What is Reid and his ilk trying to prove? Do they feel that unless they mouth their rabid anti-Communism on every occasion, their greasy employers will think perhaps that they are still communist at heart? When the Daily Record changed ownership in 1965, Reid must have felt very insecure, for scarcely had he crawled out his bed in the Western Infirmary, when he launched his vicious and dirty attack upon Arthur Scargill. The Clydebank 'crawler', as a communist for many years, knew perfectly well that no matter how important positions leaders hold, class struggles are thus called because they are determined by classes, not individuals. Reid, like every other member of the C.P., was taught this, and like most Y.C.L.'rs of the period he had surely read Plekhanov's theory of 'The role of the individual in society'. So Reid's attack on Scargill is a deliberate, dirty distortion of the truth, a fact of which the RENEGADE is well aware.

On the 6th JANUARY, 1986 the demagogue of Hillhead, where he now resides in comfort among his chosen people, assumes the mantle of prophet and in the gutter press which he serves, forecasts that Kinnock will not reach 10 Downing Street unless the N.U.M. ditch Scargill.

This is not prophecy. It is open blackmail! If Kinnock & Co. have a real policy of socialism, not social contracts, (which in essence are wage freezes) real nationalisation without Tory boards of control, a real Health Service and education policy, a peaceful foreign policy (not an adjunct of Washington), a genuine desire for Irish Independence and a free South Africa, no power on earth, not even Jimmy Reid and his millionaire boss Maxwell will prevent Kinnock being installed in 10 Downing St. And given that policy, Scargill will be the first to welcome Kinnock's conversion to socialism. As it is, the Welsh rabbit is just playing the artful dodger and Reid is not Oliver, although indeed a twister! Reid often mouths his respect for John MacLean. We, of the MacLean Society, know for sure that MacLean always despised snivellers and renegades like Reid. MacLean would regard Arthur Scargill as a true comrade and Reid as a TRAITOR TO SOCIALISM.

WELCOME TO THE NEW VANGUARD

The **Vanguard** is the only paper devoted to YOU the working people of Scotland. The **Vanguard** is devoted to your cause, to the issues that affect you, your friends and your communities.

Vanguard will raise the questions that the other papers leave unasked. The questions about housing, pollution, jobs, religious divisions. The questions about how our country is really run, and what we can do to change it.

Vanguard is not in the pay of any millionaire publisher. It is not in the pocket of any careerist politicians. It is devoted 101% to YOU the working class of Scotland.

Vanguard is named after a paper edited by John MacLean, the great patriot, socialist and teacher of the workers of Scotland. John MacLean had great confidence in the workers of Scotland. He had great confidence in our grandparents. He taught them that if they relied upon their own strength they could win liberty from poverty and exploitation.

We have the same confidence in you. We repeat his message:

"Know your own strength!"

"Dare to use it!"

THE FUTURE IS OURS

Many people today are pessimistic. They look around them and see things getting worse. They see housing decaying, industries closing, the spread of drug addiction and crime. They see a government that lies through its teeth and treats them with contempt. No wonder people get depressed and think they can do nothing.

We don't see things that way.

Far from being powerless, the working people of Scotland are the greatest force in the land. You are the great majority of the nation, yet you are governed, exploited and impoverished by a minority.

Do you realise how little support the government has in Scotland?

17% - and falling.

In all our cities and most our regions there sit Labour councils elected by your votes. In London sit Labour MPs elected by your votes. The Tories here are falling apart and deserting to the SNP. The government has not the barest fig leaf of democracy to cloak its rule.

Well, let's point the finger and say: "but the empress has no clothes".

As it's been said: "government is nine tenths in the mind of the governed"! They only rule because we allow them. When the mental chains are broken, iron ones don't last long.

Vanguard sets itself the task of breaking those mental chains. We will show that the time has come for the free men and women of Scotland to take their destiny into their own hands. We will explain how the organisation of a **Scottish Socialist Republic** can be undertaken.

Vanguard needs practical help. We need people to distribute and sell the paper. We need people to help produce the paper. We need your ideas, letters and contributions.

Let's get organised and let's start changing things around here!



JOHN MACLEAN

John MacLean, Scotland's greatest revolutionary Marxist, was born in Glasgow in 1879. His premature death at the age of 44, in 1923 was due to his devoted work on behalf of the working class and the hardships he endured at the hands of the Capitalist State, because of his consistent opposition to their brutal system of oppression, exploitation and war. It was for his great and courageous anti-war stand that MacLean is known best. He was honoured by Lenin and the Soviet people for his Anti-Imperialist War Stance and made an honorary member of the Soviet presidium and despatched Soviet Consul for Scotland. In Britain, however his reward for his opposition to the War was to spend many months of his life in appalling conditions in H.M. Prisons.

All told, John MacLean spent 38 months in prison during different sentences and but for the support of the working class for his release would probably died in Prison.

John MacLean's merit lies in his outstanding courage, honesty and dedication for and on behalf of the working class. As a teacher he devoted his life's energy to the education of the working class and there existed no such classes as he held in any part of Europe. He was a Marxist in the true sense. Not a dogmatist capable of simply quoting Marx, but one who as a theoretician in his own right was capable of applying Marxism to the concrete circumstances in which he found himself. It was by this method of reasoning that he arrived at his policy of the need for an independent Workers Republic of Scotland. In doing so he was ostracised by the London-based Socialist Parties of the time and for many years after his death, little or nothing was ever mentioned about this great man. Today, however, MacLean lives on and his works are now being eagerly sought and read by the rising generation. It is a sign of the times and one which augurs well for the workers of Scotland and the world.

ORGAN OF THE JOHN MACLEAN SOCIETY

HEALTH PROBLEMS

ARMADALE CANCER CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

THE WEST LOTHIAN town of Armdale was being dubbed the cancer capital of the world following publication of a recent report that it has the world's highest rate of death from lung cancer.

Deaths from cancer in Scotland are already higher than in any other country in the world, but those in Armdale are twice the level in Scotland as a whole.

DEATHS DUE TO INDUSTRIAL POLLUTION

The report in the British Journal for Industrial Medicine reveals that the cause of the cancer epidemic is the steel plant at Armdale belonging to North British Steel.

The death rate is highest in the streets next to the plant and in houses close to the fences of the steelworks, deaths from cancer of the lung, oesophagus and stomach.

The authors, scientists from Dundee University, have known of the problem since 1978. But in a previous report they did not say which town was involved, referring instead to a mysterious 'town V'. Now in an attempt to get the establishment to do something they have named the town.

MOTHERS AFFECTED

Bathgate is affected too, with pollution from another steelworks, also owned by North British Steel being to blame. In the worst zones of Bathgate there was evidence that the pollution was affecting pregnant women, with almost twice as many boys as girls being born.

The origin of the pollution is the process of 'ore bolting' carried on in both plants, which gives off copious amounts of poisonous fumes. This leads to fallout of iron, chromium and manganese which is either breathed in causing lung cancer or swallowed on food leading to stomach cancer.

PROFITS FROM POLLUTION

With adequate precautions in the way of filters this sort of pollution can be avoided. But for years the directors of the company found it more profitable to discharge untreated fumes over the towns. To them, the townsfolk, whose labour had made them rich were expendable.

WE PAY THE COST

Its working folk in industry, and living near it that suffer from the effects of pollution. The wealthy have always moved out to green areas like Beardsden or further afield. The irony of it is that we fight to retain our exploiters and polluters. In this rotten society, the worst fate is to have nobody exploiting you, to have no employer.

WHAT PRICE JOBS?

So we fight to retain the industries that kill us, we can't afford to think what Ravenscraig may be doing to the health of those nearby, when the dole is the only other option.

When the people of Scotland set up our own workers republic then we can count the costs of pollution. Then we can act against it, without there being any cry that we 'will scare off investors'. For then we will be employing ourselves.

Paul Cockshott

COMMUNITY NEWS

HOUSING PROBLEMS

A great deal has been written on the problems of poor inner city housing which means, if the truth is told, working-class housing schemes. State apologists and state officials rarely admit to the nature of these sprawling schemes. But in fact they are nothing other than GHETTOES built specifically to contain workers and their families.

The State, Municipal Capitalism and the Working Class:

Basically capitalism is a form of society in which a minority of people own the means of production the factories, machinery and the land. The working class who make up the vast majority of the population and who have nothing but their labour power, produce all the goods in society. Whereas the owners of the factories and machinery, the capitalist class who form the minority in society, and produce nothing, derive all the profits from the workers labour.

This theft constitutes the basic contradiction with capitalist society. Poor, stupid fools that we are, we don't benefit from our efforts beyond receiving from the capitalist, God bless them, a basic wage. This income is calculated to cover only our most basic human needs which are to eat, to be clothed, and to be sheltered.

This unequal state of affairs is guaranteed by the state machine. This machine is the organ of the ruling-class. The state is not neutral between the working-class and the capitalists, the miner's strike made it crystal-clear that the nature of the state, and the role that it plays is an oppressive one as far as the working class is concerned.

GHETTOES!

John MacLean pointed out the problems in present day society are due to the robbery of the working-class by the propertyed, capitalist class.

Since the war the capitalist class, including local government, has pursued a deliberate policy of breaking up local communities like *Govan, Gorbals and Maryhill*. Central government and local authorities have actively conspired in moving people out to the huge, grim housing schemes on the outskirts of the city. The families living in such schemes continue to endure damp, fungus-ridden houses; they continue to suffer from poor social amenities, a lack of decent educational opportunities and massive levels of unemployment.

This grey grinding daily oppression forces the youth within these ghettos to rebel and justifiably so! Unfortunately at the present time this is not an organised form of rebellion but one which only leads the youth into harming themselves by drug abuse and violence. Indeed, it could be said that the first road that's laid by the state before the builders move in to construct the schemes is the one to Barlinnich Prison.

Think about it. How many bankers are inside? Very few. It cannot be denied that the greatest percentage of those who land in prison come from the ghettos.

TWEEDLEDEE - TWEEDLEDUM?

Think about this too - hasn't the Labour party been just as guilty as the Tories in sanctioning the building of these ghettos, our equivalent of the black township in South Africa? Let us be quite clear that both the Tories and the Labour party are parties of the Capitalists and their state. Both are concerned with maintaining the Capitalists profits at the expense of the worker. Remember this the next time you read a Labour party slogan which claims it is a socialist party. Do you think a workers council would condemn you living in a workers council would condone you living in a damp house? The Labour party not only condones the fact you live in one, but actually authorised the construction of your damp-ridden house.

If these scum had given any consideration to the people they would never have tolerated the housing of them in such ghettos. It is therefore obvious that NO trust can be placed in these so called leaders to resolve the housing problems of the working class.

What can we do?

THE JOHN MACLEAN ANSWER

As John MacLean said first of all AGITATE, EDUCATE AND GET ORGANISED, for only by relying on our own strength can we hope to succeed.

Form workers action committees, fight the housing officials, the D.H.S.S. snooters, the bailiffs, the police, the drug-pushers, and the money-lenders. Drive out the criminal elements. Prevent evictions and warrant sales in an organised manner. Occupy any empty flats and houses. Create no-go areas to the State and its officials in the schemes. Only deal with the State's agents when you have to. Organise and agitate.

Educate yourselves and your families about the anti-working class, and therefore criminal nature of the capitalist state. By doing this you will be better placed to defend your community against the State.

To finish, remember that the State will always confront and oppose us. We can't expect the capitalists to give in without a fight. Don't be fooled by capitalist agents like M.P.s who try to control and smash us in the interests of their capitalist bosses. Only we should determine our methods of struggle, be they legal or illegal.

Only a Workers' State which the workers themselves construct will solve our housing problems. Only in such a state will houses be built for human needs and not for profits. Until we build such a state we must continue to dare to struggle in our communities, if we are to dare to win our case and so solve our miserable housing conditions.

Dabhaidd Cill Mhuire

SEE 'THE BOXER BENNY LYNCH' AT -

- 25 Feb-9 March Tron Theatre, Glasgow. 8PM 041-552-4267
- 11 March Portobello Town Hall, Edinburgh. 7.30PM
- 12 March Royston Community Centre, Edinburgh. 7.30PM
- 13 March Jewel Miners Club, Edinburgh. 7.30PM
- 14 March Leith Community Centre, Edinburgh. 7.30PM
- 15 March Harbour Arts Centre, Irvine
- 17 March MacRobert Centre, Stirling. 7.30PM
- 18 March Easterhouse Festival Society. 041-771-0693
- 19 March Henderson Theatre, Shotts. 7.30PM
- 20 March Biggar Theatre Workshop. 7.30PM
- 21-22 March Cumbernauld Theatre. 02367-32887
- 24-25 March Village Theatre, East Kilbride. 03552-48669
- 26 March Glenwood School, Glenrothes.
- 27 March Dunfermline Centre, Dunfermline.
- 28 March Palace Theatre, Kilmarnock. 0563-23590
- 29 March Clovenstone Community Centre, Edinburgh
- 1-2 April To be announced.
- 3 April Easterhouse Festival Society. 041-771-0693
- 4 April To be announced.
- 5 April Eastwood Recreation Centre, Giffnock.

LETTER BOX

Letter from Socialists in Sunderland North

Dear Comrades,

Aware that many activists are not in the Labour Party, I welcome this opportunity, through the MacLean Society that unites us, to sketch the current situation in our town.

Here the vast majority of political activists are in the Labour Party though many in the movement have had their education in other parties.

The Constituency has an electorate of around 70,000 and houses the main (virtually only) industries in the Town - Wearmouth Pit and the two shipyards British Shipbuilders (on the south side of the river) and Austin and Pickersgill.

The latter has one of the best Shop Stewards Committees in the country and despite recent cutbacks and concessions the organisational strength still remains thanks to a few stewards who are the backbone of the organisation.

There is an average 20% unemployment in the town though many districts suffer disproportionately, the East End has nearly 50% unemployment while Southwick (the area the Pit and A & P) and Town End Farm have over 30%. The many parallels with Scottish industrial towns and cities are obvious as far as Housing, Health and living standards are concerned. The lack of any national unemployed movement (as in the thirties) and the disinterest of the national leadership is reflected in the absence of any great involvement from those on the dole, this is a great weakness.

Sunderland North Labour Party

The party is the dominant political force in the town, they are a few C.P. and N.C.P. members whose valuable contribution is mainly on the Trades Council.

Sunderland District Council is Labour dominated and is a typical North-East administration, it has long been estranged from the District and Constituency parties who are at loggerheads over accountability and the carrying out of local manifesto pledges. Little wonder that while we are not 'Militant' we sympathise greatly with Liverpool who, despite any faults, are penalised by this Government and then persecuted by the party leadership for carrying out the most basic of socialist policy which they were elected on.

Membership of the party is small (around 400) though the majority are based in industry or the public sector and this is our greatest asset, we may suffer less from the 'trendy element' but complacency and compromise quickly lead to degeneration and de-politicisation which is more evident in England and in all honesty plagues our movement.

Miners Strike, Trade Unions and Political involvement

Further hardships are the price of defeat, yet despite the political inaction and isolation which hastened defeat, the Miners are more politically involved than ever. There are fewer illusions than ever and a greater understanding of the role the party must play in the fight for socialism.

The recent Tynebridge by-election showed the apathy that is prevalent in the area, only 38% bothered to vote, few see any radical alternative. The greatest advance for us were the constitutional reforms a few years ago and the election of an M.P. who is on the 'Left', the days of an advance on the right have receded and Left 'idealism' has disappeared hopefully forever.

Political involvement is not seen an primary by many able comrades and this has resulted in the fatal flaw to withdraw back into trade union activity which can only temporarily stave off confrontation and defeat, careerists and opportunists soon fill any vacuum and this is always a fear in England as permanent political involvement of the working class is not yet a reality.

We are by no means a mass party in Sunderland yet we have many capable and experienced members, most other areas in the North are controlled by the right and we feel isolated. Socialist ascendancy can only come from the most politicised and best organised area (or country), thus my membership of the John MacLean Society.

Finally, the greatest achievement of the Miners strike was the national network that was built and will prove invaluable in the future. For the time being the Scottish, Welsh, Durham and Kent coalfields are paying the price for keeping the movement's principles alive.

Neil C. Rafeek
Sec. Sunderland North C.L.P.
(personal capacity)

"The Vanguard" resurrected
(The Vanguard, May 1920)

Irishmen say that Ireland is unbeatable; we say that *The Vanguard* is irreplaceable. It is appropriate that it be resurrected on May Day 1920 to hail the dawn of the world revolution that may break out any time and anywhere. We consecrate *The Vanguard* to the cause of the workers' revolution.

Some may remember that when Hyndman and Justice betrayed the British Socialist Party and the International by taking the side of the British capitalist class in the "Great War", we of the BSP along with *Forward* steered the socialist movement and prepared the way for the strikes that will ever make famous the class-conscious workers of the Clyde Valley.

We started our modest little paper in September 1915 and had just put into the hands of the Civic Press our fifth issue, January 1916, when we learned that the Police had raided the Press to stop *Forward* for its fine report of Lloyd George's trouncing in St. Andrew's Hall, 25 December 1915, by the nine hundred delegates from the engineering works on the Clydeside. Naturally, our paper was seized also as we had two articles on the same "Christmas pantomime", of which Lloyd George was the "knock-out". When the seizure was raised in the Commons, Lloyd George stated that *The Vanguard* was the worst paper in the country. At the time, we went to printer after printer, but were told time and again that the authorities had sent out a circular forbidding anyone to print the paper. Before this I had (November 1915) been sentenced to five days or five pounds by Sheriff Lee, and then dismissed by the Govan School Board. Immediately thereafter the BSP was turned out of the Panopticon, and on 26 December 1915 was refused entry into the Good Templars' Hall by a cordon of police drawn round the entrance. Then our Russian comrade, Peter Petroff, was arrested and thrust into prison after a farce of a trial, in which Petroff defended himself and defeated the furious old humbug of a sheriff in the interpretation of the section of the Defence of the Realm Act used to indict him.

In due course came the arrest of James D. MacDougall and myself and our imprisonment for one year and three years respectively. The government intended to so cripple us that we would be effectively disposed of as agents in the class war. The preparations in Russia and the outbreak of the first revolution saved us after a degradation and drugging that we might call devilish, but for the more monstrous deeds of the war and the slow death-pressure Britain is applying to Central Europe, Russia, and Ireland.

The continuance of the war during 1917 and the issue of *The Call* by the BSP, purged of the socialist element, headed by Hyndman, made it impossible and unnecessary to resurrect *The Vanguard*. MacDougall went to work in the mines in Lanarkshire, and started amongst the miners there the finest piece of socialist propaganda ever conducted in Scotland. *Forward* carefully suppressed references to MacDougall's work as his policy of revolutionary direct action was antagonistic to that of the editor and the fossil types inside the ILP. Nonetheless, the work was done, and that explains the fervent support Lanarkshire gave to the premature forty-hour strike, and to the policy of aggression last year that lifted the British miners the forefront on the workers' movement throughout the world.

The skill and cuteness of the government prevented a strike of the miners, who might have received the support of the rest of the workers to the detriment of the British proposals at the Peace Conference, to the defeat of Britain's anti-Russian policy, and to the endangerment of British capitalism itself. Whilst giving free scope to Smillie and his colleagues at the Coal Commission - now seen to be a farce to stave off revolt - the government set itself to the task of breaking up the miners' reform movement and driving MacDougall out of public life. This accomplished, it then faced up to the Miners' Federation itself, and has now succeeded in driving Smillie out of the fighting ranks, has defeated direct action for the nationalisation of the mines, and has isolated the miners from the other trade unions.

At the same time it has paralysed the BSP and the SLP, and may do so to the ILP as well, so as to clear the ground for a safe and sane Labourism; safe and sane, because dominated by ideas of the reform of capitalism rather than by the determination to destroy capitalism and inaugurate the workers' republic.

Dissatisfaction with the plight of the BSP, maimed by the year's onslaught of capitalism, has compelled us to resurrect *The Vanguard* in the hope that we may concentrate the minds of the workers on the revolution to be gone through in this country as well as on the one gone through already in Russia. The main use of the Russian workers' success is the inspiration we ought to derive from it for the accomplishment of a similar feat within the bounds of Britain.

John MacLean

WILL THE REAL ADAM SMITH STAND UP?

ECONOMICS STARTED IN SCOTLAND

Some would say it started in Edinburgh with David Hume, the most illustrious philosopher of the 18th century. But most would give Glasgow the credit. For it was in Glasgow that Adam Smith was the Professor of Moral Philosophy.

It was his famous book, 'The Wealth of Nations', that really got economics off the ground. He is better known than any subsequent economist. Unless you include Karl Marx, that is. But what is Adam Smith known for now? People think of him as the first advocate of the free market. He is seen as preaching the gospel of laissez faire. He is remembered for having been against state intervention. In short, he was seen as a sort of fore-runner of Keith Joseph and Margaret Thatcher.

This is the image that Tory-backed Adam Smith Institute likes to put across. I will not say that this is all lies. But it does hide the most important side of Adam Smith. It hides the side that we Socialists should know about. For Smith was not only the founder of Capitalist Economics. He also provided the essential ideas for Socialist Economics. Without the groundwork provided by Smith, Marx would never have been able to write *Das Kapital*.

VALUE AND PRICE

Modern day Capitalist Economists (and that is 90% of them), teach that the values of goods are determined by supply and demand. They say it is the market that determined what something is worth.

Smith did not say this. He said something quite different. He said that the value of goods is determined by the labour required to make them. Indeed the first sentence of his book says:

"The annual labour of every nation is the fund which originally supplies it with all the necessities and conveniences of life which it annually consumes, and which consist always either in the immediate produce of that labour or in what is purchased with that produce from other nations."

FOR COLIN MACDONALD AND JOHN MCLEOD

Yesterday, around Queens Park, we clustered
Temperature shrank, snow slid lazily down
Glasgow was on the move, organised and mustered
We wore the movement's microphonic crown

50,000 listened to Michael Foot condemn Margaret Thatcher
We congregated, froze, agreed
The terrible loneliness of crowds, the harbour
Where the people's boat lay quayed

I blew thin frosty breath into the air
The momentum of opinion grabbed
Me uncouthly by the ear
This was a hardship which had not lagged

Far behind the 50 yards since 1931
Above a solitary white helicopter
Kept its hovering police, none
Of thus trusted this foreign cavortier

A drunk behind me wined out The Red Flag
It was funny movie time, a young
Islington Socialist began to brag
About London marches, I stood waiting
for an early Spring.

George Gunn

BUT

"As soon as stock has accumulated in the hands of particular persons, some of them will naturally employ it in setting to work industrious people, who they will supply with materials and subsistence, in order to make a profit by the sale of their work, or by the value of their labour adds to the value of the materials."

"As soon as the land of any country has all become private property, the landlords, like all other men, love to reap where they never sowed, and demand a rent even for its natural produce...He [the labourer] must give up to the landlord a portion of what his labour either collects or produces. This portion, or, what comes to the same thing, the price of this portion, constitutes the rent of land."

This is the Adam Smith that the Tories are not so keen on.

Of course they want to have it both ways. They claim that prices are beyond government control since they are determined by supply and demand in the market. But that does not stop them blaming high prices on high wages. Smith was of the opinion that high profits raise the price of goods much more than high wages. What he said of the capitalists of his day remains true still:

"Our merchants and master-manufacturers complain much of the bad effects of high wages in raising the price and thereby lessening the sale of their goods both at home and abroad. They say nothing about the bad effects of high profits. They are silent with regard to the pernicious effect of their own gains. They complain only of those of other people."

THEATRE EVENTS

UNITED ARTISTS (SCOTLAND) will be touring the play, 'The Boxer: Benny Lynch', by Peter Arnott from the 25th February to the 12th April around venues in Strathclyde, Lothian and Fife. See advert on page

This new play about the famous Scottish boxer was first performed by United Artists at the Mayfest last year. It covers his life from anonymous beginnings in the Gorbals, through his rise to hero status, to his tragic death. The play centres however on the social issues behind his rise and the pressures that pre-figure his legendary descent into alcoholism.

In 1937 Benny Lynch became Flyweight Champion of the World and was welcomed back to Glasgow by a crowd of thirty-two thousand people. He was one of their own 'made good' and they dragged him triumphant around the city for two miles in a Corporation Tram for everyone to see. The following year he lost the Title and in 1946 he died a down-and-out, only thirty-three years of age.

Alcoholism and the suffering it causes, not only to the addict but to those close to them, is a main concern of the play. This lies in with the intentions of United Artists since its formation last year of promoting writing which is not only relevant to Scottish people's lives, but which can also be used as a catalyst for the discussion of serious social and political issues. Discussions are held after every performance to which all members of the audience are invited to contribute. This is a serious story, but it is told with warmth and humour, both provocative and popular entertainment.

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GHETTOES!

John MacLean pointed out the problems in present day society are due to the robbery of the working-class by the propertied, capitalist class.

Since the war the capitalist class, including local government, has pursued a deliberate policy of breaking up local communities like *Govan, Gorbals and Maryhill*. Central government and local authorities have actively conspired in moving people out to the huge, grim housing schemes on the outskirts of the city. The families living in such schemes continue to endure damp, fungus-ridden houses; they continue to suffer from poor social amenities, a lack of decent educational opportunities and massive levels of unemployment.

This grey grinding daily oppression forces the youth within these ghettos to rebel and justifiably so! Unfortunately at the present time this is not an organised form of rebellion but one which only leads the youth into harming themselves by drug abuse and violence. Indeed, it could be said that the first road that's laid by the state before the builders move in to construct the schemes is the one to Barlinnie Prison.

Think about it. How many bankers are inside? Very few. It cannot be denied that the greatest percentage of those who land in prison come from the ghettos.

TWEEDLEDEE - TWEEDLEDUM?

Think about this too - hasn't the Labour party been just as guilty as the Tories in sanctioning the building of these ghettos, our equivalent of the black township in South Africa? Let us be quite clear that both the Tories and the Labour party are parties of the Capitalists and their state. Both are concerned with maintaining the Capitalists profits at the expense of the worker. Remember this the next time you read a Labour party slogan which claims it is a socialist party. Do you think a workers council would condemn you living in a workers council would condone you living in a damp house? The Labour party not only condones the fact you live in one, but actually authorised the construction of your damp-ridden house.

If these scum had given any consideration to the people they would never have tolerated the housing of them in such ghettos. It is therefore obvious that NO trust can be placed in these so called leaders to resolve the housing problems of the working class.

What can we do ?

THE JOHN MACLEAN ANSWER

As John MacLean said first of all AGITATE, EDUCATE AND GET ORGANISED, for only by relying on our own strength can we hope to succeed.

Form workers action committees, fight the housing officials, the D.H.S.S. snappers, the police, the drug-pushers, and the money-lenders. Drive out the criminal elements. Prevent evictions and warrant sales in an organised manner. Occupy any empty flats and houses. Create no-go areas to the State and its officials in the schemes. Only deal with the State's agents when you have to. Organise and agitate.

Educate yourselves and your families about the anti-working class, and therefore criminal nature of the capitalist state. By doing this you will be better placed to defend your community against the State.

To finish, remember that the State will always confront and oppose us. We can't expect the capitalists to give in without a fight. Don't be fooled by capitalist agents like M.P.s who try to control and smash us in the interests of their capitalist bosses. Only we should determine our methods of struggle, be they legal or illegal.

Only a Workers' State which the workers themselves construct will solve our housing problems. Only in such a state will houses be built for human needs and not for profits. Until we build such a state we must continue to dare to struggle in our communities, if we are to dare to win our case and so solve our miserable housing conditions

Dabhaidh Cill Mhuiré

SEE 'THE BOXER BENNY LYNCH' AT -

- 25 Feb-9 March Tron Theatre, Glasgow. 8PM 041-552-4267
- 11 March Portobello Town Hall, Edinburgh. 7.30PM
- 12 March Royston Community Centre, Edinburgh. 7.30PM
- 13 March Jewel Miners Club, Edinburgh. 7.30PM
- 14 March Leith Community Centre, Edinburgh. 7.30PM
- 15 March Harbour Arts Centre, Irvine
- 17 March MacRobert Centre, Stirling. 7.30PM
- 18 March Easterhouse Festival Society, 041-771-0693
- 19 March Henderson Theatre, Shotts. 7.30PM
- 20 March Biggar Theatre Workshop. 7.30PM
- 21-22 March Cumbernauld Theatre. 02367-32887
- 24-25 March Village Theatre, East Kilbride. 03552-48669
- 26 March Glenwood School, Glenrothes.
- 27 March Dunfermline Centre, Dunfermline.
- 28 March Palace Theatre, Kilmarnock. 0563-23590
- 29 March Clovenstone Community Centre, Edinburgh
- 1-2 April To be announced.
- 3 April Easterhouse Festival Society. 041-771-0693
- 4 April To be announced.
- 5 April Eastwood Recreation Centre, Giffnock.

LETTER BOX

Letter from Socialists in Sunderland North

Dear Comrades,

Aware that many activists are not in the Labour Party, I welcome this opportunity, through the MacLean Society that unites us, to sketch the current situation in our town.

Here the vast majority of political activists are in the Labour Party though many in the movement have had their education in other parties.

The Constituency has an electorate of around 70,000 and houses the main (virtually only) industries in the Town - Wearmouth Pit and the two shipyards British Shipbuilders (on the south side of the river) and Austin and Pickersgill.

The latter has one of the best Shop Stewards Committees in the country and despite recent cutbacks and concessions the organisational strength still remains thanks to a few stewards who are the backbone of the organisation.

There is an average 20% unemployment in the town, though many districts suffer disproportionately. The East End has nearly 50% unemployment while Southwick (the area the Pit and A & P) and Town End Farm have over 30%. The many parallels with Scottish industrial Towns and Cities are obvious as far as Housing, Health and living standards are concerned. The lack of any national unemployed movement (as in the thirties) and the disinterest of the national leadership is reflected in the absence of any great involvement from those on the dole, this is a great weakness.

Sunderland North Labour Party

The party is the dominant political force in the town, they are a few C.P. and N.C.P. members whose valuable contribution is mainly on the Trades Council.

Sunderland District Council is Labour dominated and is a typical North-East administration, it has long been estranged from the District and Constituency parties who are at loggerheads over accountability and the carrying out of local manifesto pledges. Little wonder that while we are not 'Militant' we sympathise greatly with Liverpool who, despite any faults, are penalised by this Government and then persecuted by the party leadership for carrying out the most basic of socialist policy which they were elected on.

Membership of the party is small (around 400) though the majority are based in industry or the public sector and this is our greatest asset, we may suffer less from the 'trendy element' but complacency and compromise quickly lead to degeneration and de-politicisation which is more evident in England and in all honesty plagues our movement.

Miners Strike, Trade Unions and Political involvement

Further hardships are the price of defeat, yet despite the political inaction and isolation which hastened defeat, the Miners are more politically involved than ever. There are fewer illusions than ever and a greater understanding of the role the party must play in the fight for socialism.

The recent Tynebridge by-election showed the apathy that is prevalent in the area, only 38% bothered to vote, few saw any radical alternative. The greatest advance for us were the constitutional reforms a few years ago and the election of an M.P. who is on the 'Left', the days of an advance on the right have receded and Left 'idealism' has disappeared hopefully forever.

Political involvement is not seen an primary by many able comrades and this has resulted in the fatal flaw to withdraw back into trade union activity which can only temporarily stave off confrontation and defeat, careerists and opportunists soon fill any vacuum and this is always a fear in England as permanent political involvement of the working class is not yet a reality.

We are by no means a mass party in Sunderland yet we have many capable and experienced members, most other areas in the North are controlled by the right and we feel isolated. Socialist ascendancy can only come from the most politicised and best organised area (or country), thus my membership of the John MacLean Society.

Finally, the greatest achievement of the Miners strike was the national network that was built and will prove invaluable in the future. For the time being the Scottish, Welsh, Durham and Kent coalfields are paying the price for keeping the movement's principles alive.

Neil C. Rafeek
Sec. Sunderland North C.L.P.
(personal capacity)